

Marianne nodded. Her sister went out of the back door, and closing it quietly after her, looked up at the General's window. She could make the bedroom window from the hen-house roof, and from there, slip into the sitting-room which contained the desk.

The girl removed her shoes, and with no difficulty, climbed onto the roof of the low building. From this height she could reach the sill of the bedroom window. By standing on the hen-house ventilator, the sill was only three inches above her waist. Holding her skirts well above her knees, she threw her right leg over the sill, and then grasping the window-frame, sprang upward with her other foot, until she grasped the sill in the bend of her right knee. In another second she was in the room.

With a beating heart, Elspeth searched the bedroom, and then crept stealthily into the sitting-room. She turned over in vain all the papers on the desk. The drawers were locked. She had heard that secret documents were never locked up, but were usually hidden in receptacles unlikely of being suspected of containing anything of value. She turned back the rug without making a sound, shook the window curtains and examined the bottom of the only upholstered chair in the room. In despair, she went back to the desk.

Marianne, left alone, repeated to herself as she wrung her hands, "Life or death, life or death. There must be death for me, but for Elspeth, there must be life. I must let nobody in through the door. Elspeth has lost something, lost something."

Her mind became vacant again, and then she remembered her sister's admonition. "Use all the will-power that you have." Elspeth was in danger. Their dying mother had left the child to her care ten years ago. And now she must save her. She closed her eyes and her terror for Elspeth increased. She started to her feet as the darkness seemed to grow.

She forgot to open her eyes, and with clenched hands, her face white, she began to pray.

"Mother of God," she whispered, "Save her, save her."

A sound came from the street, and Marianne nearly screamed. She clapped her hand over her mouth, and the sound outside passed off in the distance. Then she became aware of a light on the wall which shone out in the apparent darkness of the room. A cross of flame became visible. Marianne crossed herself and the flame vanished. In its place a framed picture of the German Kaiser appeared. Then this too vanished, and the cross flamed out again. When this faded into the darkness, Marianne opened her eyes.

"It is a message for Elspeth," she thought. Steadily she crept back to the back door and opened it. Her sister was just trying to leave her window on the return journey.

"The Kaiser's picture," Marianne whispered, "It is there."

Elspeth returned to the General's room and looked for the Kaiser's picture. It hung over the mantel in an imitation wooden frame. The edges of the frame crossed each other at the corners, and there was a round knob on each end. The girl unscrewed first one knob and then another. In each receptacle thus disclosed, a roll of paper lay. From the third one a blue paper slipped.

Trembling with excitement, Elspeth placed it within her dress, and in another minute stood breathless in the kitchen.

"Quick, Marianne," she whispered, "the matches!"

The other brought the box.

"Oh, Elspeth," she cried, "your hands are red with blood."

"Nonsense, my dear. I spilled the red ink in the General's room, but I wiped it all up with my petticoat. It has merely stained my hands a little."

Together the two girls burned the blue paper, and then Elspeth removed all traces of the red ink from her